

On June 29, insurgents rushed to the Sparrow Hills on the outskirts of Moscow, where 17-year-old Tsar Ivan had gone to escape the fire. The view of a huge crowd scared Ivan, who was forced to give generous promises to pacify the protesters. The riot lost momentum and ended in early July. Intimidated by the scope of the rebellion, Ivan instituted government reforms to reduce the influence of noble families and established a special council, known as “Izbrannaya Rada,” to permit representatives of the lower classes to advise the tsar on political and economic issues.

SEE ALSO: Bulavin’s Rebellion, 1707–1708; Decembrists to the Rise of Russian Marxism; Pugachev’s Rebellion, 1773–1775

#### References and Suggested Readings

Buganov, V. I. (1986) *Moscow Chronicles: Popular Uprisings in the 11–18th Centuries*. Moscow (in Russian).

## Moscow fire and protest, 1547

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A major protest broke out against Ivan IV following a large fire that engulfed the city of Moscow over two days in June 1547, killing 4,000 people and displacing many residents. Rumor spread among the urban dwellers that the Glinskiy family, a noble clan in the tsar’s entourage, was responsible for setting the fire. Some 42 years earlier, in 1505, Anna Glinskaya, Ivan IV’s grandmother, whom many thought had the capacity to transform herself into a bird, was strangled for witchcraft. According to popular mythology, Muscovites believed that on June 21 Anna metamorphosed into a bird, spilling blood that set the city alight. This deep-seated superstition fueled popular protests for the execution of Glinskiy family members.

On June 28, in a failed effort to calm the discontent, the Glinskiy family invited protesters to a liturgical mass at the Assumption Cathedral on the Kremlin grounds, the site of the imperial compound. The tactic failed just as the uprising was reaching its climax: the masses sacked Glinskiy mansions, killing members of the family.